U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE
OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

732 North Capitol Street NW
Washington, DC 20401-0050

March 29, 2013

The Honorable Henry A. Waxman
Co-Chair
Bicameral Task Force on Climate Change
Ranking Member
Committee on Energy and Commerce
2322A Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Sheldon Whitehouse
Co-Chair
Bicameral Task Force on Climate Change
Chairman
Subcommittee on Oversight
410 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Edward J. Markey
Co-Chair
Bicameral Task Force on Climate Change
Ranking Member
Committee on Natural Resources
1329 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Benjamin L. Cardin
Co-Chair
Bicameral Task Force on Climate Change
Chairman
Subcommittee on Water and Wildlife
410 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairmen Waxman, Whitehouse, Markey, and Cardin:

Thank you for your February 25, 2013 letter requesting that the Government Printing Office (GPO) Office of Inspector General (OIG), as the first part of your request, identify the existing requirements in legislation, regulation, executive order, and other directives that apply to the GPO, assess whether GPO is meeting these requirements, and if GPO is not fully meeting the requirements, make recommendations for improving its performance.

To address this part of your request, we asked GPO to identify existing requirements to address climate change and also asked GPO what accomplishments have been achieved in relation to these requirements.

GPO responded that management has articulated a vision for sustainable environmental stewardship. GPO reported its vision supplements longstanding environmental practices at GPO, including the use of printing papers that meet the requirements for recycled content contained in the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1989, as amended, and corresponding Executive Orders (EO); the use of printing inks that comply with the requirements of the Vegetable Ink Printing Act of 1994; and working with the Environmental Protection Agency and the District of Columbia to meet the standards for emissions of volatile organic compounds (VOC' s). GPO reported it recognizes the importance of EO 13514,"Federal Leadership in Environmental, Energy, and Economic Performance."

In October 2012, GPO obtained certification as a sustainable green printer from the Sustainable Green Printing Partnership (SGP). SGP is a non-profit independent third party organization that certifies sustainability in the graphic communications industry. Last year GPO was the only facility in government to receive the certification for sustainable green printing.

Over the years, GPO reported it has realized many of its environmental goals including the use of more environmentally friendly paper, enhancing the efficiency of fleet operations, installation of a highly reflective roofing system, reduction of both solid and hazardous waste, and a reduction in VOC's. During the last ten years, VOC emissions were reduced by about 50 percent. In FY 2012, VOC emissions were down 28 percent compared to FY 2011.

GPO provided us with the following information in support of its accomplishments:

- Reduced the use of fossil fuels in its GPO fleet by replacing 22 vehicles with alternative fuel vehicles and reduced the fleet from 38 to 25 vehicles in Fiscal Years (FY) 2009 and 2010.

- Reduced energy intensity by 15.6 percent between FY 2008 and 2012 by upgrading to variable frequency drive motors and variable air volume technology for air-handling units. Also, began using higher voltage systems to minimize transmission by transitioning from a 208 volt system to new equipment that operates at 480 volts, and is introducing 480 volt substations to provide higher voltage output.

- Improved water use and efficiency by upgrading fixtures, modifying piping and activating a recycle loop between GPO and Capitol Power Corporation to return 280,000 gallons of industrial water annually from GPO to Capitol Power Corporation for reuse in steam generation. GPO initiated a fire suppression system sprinkler head replacement program in which GPO replaced approximately 200 valves and upgraded/insulated 2,000 feet of piping over the past four years to repair leaking components, or mismatched interfaces undergoing galvanic degradation. GPO installed low-flow upgrade fixtures in its restroom and eliminated fixtures in some restrooms. Of the fixtures that have been assessed, 90 percent were replaced with low-flow upgrades, and 10 percent were eliminated. GPO installed a new cooling tower as part of a chiller plant project in FY2002, and upgraded the fill in a second cooling project in FY 2007. GPO installed a self-metering pumped chemical system in the cooling tower that reduced the amount of chemical additive used and almost eliminated scale buildup on the cooling towers, leading to more efficient heat transfer and less water waste.

- Improved pollution prevention and waste elimination by recycling all the waste paper generated and other products such as pallets, waste wood, aluminum, copper, brass, steel, motor oil, vacuum pump oil, synthetic oil, other lubricating oil, and grease. GPO uses all of the post-consumer fibers for printing the Federal Register

and Congressional Record which are GPO's largest printing jobs. GPO looks for inks made with renewable sources of raw materials and always meets or exceeds the minimum requirements in the Vegetable Ink Printing Act. GPO has asked ink suppliers to minimize the use of fish oil in the products it purchases. GPO uses low VOC fountain solution on the presses and installed a solvent recovery system which allows recycling of used blanket wash. GPO installed a pH control system in the pre-press area to prevent water pollution due to high pH levels. The pH control system ensures that all waste water from the area is properly neutralized before it enters the sewer.

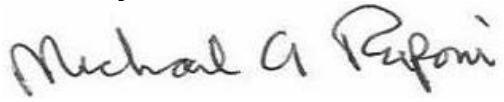
- Sustained design, construction, and operations by replacing the roof with 83,000 square feet of highly reflective surface on the three of its largest buildings (roughly 47 percent) at the main GPO facilities since FY 2009. GPO reused old surface and ballast as construction backfill, which amounts to approximately 1.1 million pounds of recycled rock.

While GPO has reported significant accomplishments, our analysis of the goals outlined in EO 13514 disclosed GPO could further develop a plan to fully address greenhouse gas emissions reduction goals, water conservation goals, pollution prevention and waste elimination goals, high performance building goals, and sustainable acquisition practice goals. In part, EO 13514 requires federal agencies establish a percentage reduction target for agency-wide reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by FY 2020 (relative to a FY 2008 baseline), reduce potable water consumption intensity by 2 percent annually through FY 2020 relative to a FY 2007 base year (for 26 percent total reduction), reduce industrial, landscaping, and agricultural water consumption by 2 percent annually through FY 2020 relative to a FY 2010 base year (for 20 percent total reduction), and divert at least 50 percent of non-hazardous solid waste and at least 50 percent of construction and demolition materials and debris from landfills to recycling or recovery operations.

You also asked that we assess the authorities the GPO has to reduce emissions of heat-trapping pollution, GPO's authorities to make the nation more resilient to the effects of climate change, and the most effective additional steps GPO could take to reduce emissions or strengthen resiliency. We could not identify any authorities the GPO has related to these requests.

We continue to work closely with managers at GPO and note that Senior Managers are actively engaged in working with the OIG to improve operations and maintain a long-standing record in delivering a world-class service to our Nation. If you have any questions or need further information, please contact me at (202) 512-0039.

Sincerely,



Michael A. Raponi
Inspector General